UNITED NATIONS **A**

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/RES/51/219
4 March 1997

Fifty-first session
Agenda item 114

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Fifth Committee (A/51/748)]

51/219. Programme planning

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 37/234 of 21 December 1982, 38/227 A of 20 December 1983, 41/213 of 19 December 1986, 45/253 of 21 December 1990, 47/214 of 23 December 1992 and section I.B of its resolution 48/218 A of 23 December 1993 and its decision 50/452 of 22 December 1995,

Having examined the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001,[1]

Having considered the views of the Main Committees of the General Assembly on the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001,

Having also considered the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the work of its thirty-sixth session,[2]

Having further considered the report of the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1994-1995[3] and the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on strengthening the role of evaluation findings in programme design, delivery and policy directives,[4]

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[1] A/51/6 (Perspective), A/51/6 (Note) and A/51/6 (Progs. 1-25).

[2] A/51/16 (Parts I and II); see Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 16.

[3] A/51/128 and Add.1.

[4] A/51/88, annex.

I

MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1998-2001

1. Adopts the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001,[5] together with the relevant recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination[6] and the additional conclusions and recommendations contained in the annex to the present resolution, taking into account the views of the Main Committees of the General Assembly;

2. Reaffirms that the medium-term plan, as adopted, is the principal policy directive of the United Nations and shall serve as a framework for the formulation of the biennial programme budgets;

3. Stresses the importance of ensuring that the medium-term plan reflects all mandated programmes and activities, and decides to include reference in the approved version of the plan to the legislative mandates relevant to the work to be carried out;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to propose revisions to the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation,[7] taking into account the views expressed by Member States thereon, and to submit such revisions to the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-eighth session;

5. Reaffirms the role of the Committee for Programme and Coordination as the main subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council for planning, programming and coordination;

6. Emphasizes the importance of the consultative process with Member States;

7. Also emphasizes the importance of the contribution of the sectoral, regional and central intergovernmental bodies, in particular the Main Committees of the General Assembly, in reviewing and improving the quality of the medium-term plan and its revisions;

8. Regrets that some programmes of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 were not reviewed by the relevant intergovernmental bodies;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to take all appropriate measures, including ad hoc measures, and to submit proposals to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, so as to enable the Main Committees of the General Assembly as well as the sectoral, functional and regional bodies effectively to review the relevant portions of the medium-term plan or its revisions, with a view to facilitating their consideration by the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Fifth Committee;

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[5] A/51/6 (Progs. 1-25); see Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 6.

[6] See A/51/16 (Parts I and II); see Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 16.

[7] ST/SGB/PPBME Rules/1(1987).

II

STRUCTURE

1. Notes with concern that the Secretary-General, in presenting the programme structure of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, did not take fully into account the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions or the views and opinions expressed by Member States, as requested in decision 50/452;

2. Decides to approve the programme structure of the medium-term plan, subject to the provisions of the present resolution;

3. Decides also to maintain disarmament as an independent programme in the medium-term plan;

4. Decides further to adopt programme 19 (Human rights) without prejudice to consideration by the General Assembly of the ongoing process of restructuring the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat;

5. Decides to review in depth the structure of the medium-term plan at its fifty-fifth session, through the Committee for Programme and Coordination;

III

PRIORITIES

1. Stresses the importance of priority-setting as an integral part of the planning, programming and budgeting process;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to present to the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-eighth session recommendations on priority-setting, including at the subprogramme level, within the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001;

3. Also requests the Secretary-General to implement the medium-term plan in accordance with the agreed overall priorities as contained in the annex to the present resolution;

IV

PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE REPORT

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1994-1995;[3]

2. Endorses the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination[6] regarding the report of the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1994-1995;

V

OTHER CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND COORDINATION

1. Endorses the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-sixth session[6] that have not otherwise been approved by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session;

2. Notes with concern the low rate of implementation of the self-evaluation of the programmes, as reflected in paragraph 269 of the report of the Board of Auditors.[8]

89th plenary meeting
18 December 1996

ANNEX

Conclusions and recommendations on programmes and subprogrammes of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001

Introduction and priorities

1. The medium-term plan is a translation of legislative mandates into programmes. Its objectives and strategies are derived from the policy orientations and goals set by the intergovernmental organs. In this respect, the medium-term plan constitutes the principal policy directive of the United Nations.

2. In response to the need to address efficiently and effectively persistent problems, as well as to respond to emerging trends and challenges of the future, the Organization will, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, give priority to the following areas of work during the implementation of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001:

(a) Maintenance of international peace and security;

(b) Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development, in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions and recent United Nations conferences;

(c) Development of Africa;

(d) Promotion of human rights;

(e) Effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts;

(f) Promotion of justice and international law;

(g) Disarmament;

(h) Drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations;

Programme 1. Political affairs

Paragraph 1.1

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (a) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

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[8] Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 5 (A/51/5), vol. I, sect. II.

At the end of the paragraph add:

The programme also includes the promotion of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions.

Paragraph 1.3

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (b) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

In the third line, for recent resolutions 47/120 A read relevant resolutions, including resolutions 47/120 A

Paragraph 1.4 (b)

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (c) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Paragraph 1.4 (d)

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (d) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Paragraph 1.4 (h)

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (e) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

At the end of the paragraph, insert:

as well as assistance to and cooperation with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in the implementation of its mandate

Paragraph 1.5

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (f) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Paragraph 1.6

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (g) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Paragraph 1.7

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (h) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Paragraph 1.8

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (i) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Paragraph 1.9

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (j) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Paragraph 1.10

Replace the first sentence with the following:

In implementing the subprogramme, the Department will strive in particular to reinforce the Organization's capacity for early warning and good offices, and for non-military measures to prevent disputes from escalating into conflicts, as well as for resolving those which have erupted, while fully respecting the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Member States and non-intervention in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, as well as the principle of consent, which is an essential element for the success of such efforts.

Paragraph 1.11

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (1) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Paragraph 1.12

Replace the last sentence with the following:

Contact with relevant regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and other private and academic research institutes, without compromising the impartiality of the United Nations, will also be maintained as part of this subprogramme to assist the Secretary-General in his political contacts with Member States.

Paragraphs 1.13 to 1.18

Replace the text of the paragraphs with the following, as a separate programme:

1.13. The mandate for the programme on disarmament stems from the Charter of the United Nations and from the aims and purposes proclaimed by the General Assembly. The implementation of this programme should be guided by the priorities established in the relevant General Assembly resolutions and decisions. The Centre for Disarmament Affairs is responsible for implementing this programme.

1.14. The first objective of this programme is to provide organizational and substantive secretariat support to multilateral bodies entrusted with deliberation and/or negotiations on disarmament issues, including the meeting of States parties and other international meetings related to multilateral disarmament agreements.

1.15. The second objective is to follow and assess current and future trends in the field of disarmament and international security in order to assist Member States, and to enable the Secretary-General also to assist them, in their search for agreement. Apart from substantive issues involved in the deliberative and/or negotiating process, this activity should address the challenges arising from the implementation of the relevant General Assembly resolutions as well as relevant treaties.

1.16. The third objective will be to support and promote regional disarmament efforts and initiatives using approaches freely among the States of the region and taking into account the legitimate requirements of States for self-defence and specific characteristics of each region. Regional solutions will be more vigorously pursued as regional conflicts

increasingly pose a threat to peace and security. Regional dialogue on crucial disarmament and security issues will be advanced through, inter alia, the organization of conferences.

1.17. The fourth objective consists of providing impartial, factual information on the disarmament efforts of the United Nations to Member States, parliamentarians, research and academic institutions and specialized non-governmental organizations through the disarmament information programme and by providing Member States with full access to all relevant databases, including on disarmament. This would include, as appropriate, organizing open-ended conferences, seminars and workshops for informal exchanges of views on arms control, disarmament and international security issues. The disarmament fellowship programme will continue to be pursued with the primary objective of promoting further the disarmament expertise of Member States, particularly in the developing countries. Member States will be assisted in addressing specific disarmament concerns through the provision of training and advisory services.

1.18. The fifth objective would be to continue to inform the public on an objective and updated basis of the United Nations disarmament activities. In this context, the three regional centres for peace and disarmament established in Nepal, Peru and Togo should be utilized. These centres should address the important security problems in their respective regions and subregions in a balanced manner.

1.19. This programme is expected to enable Member States to conduct deliberations and negotiations on disarmament issues in a smooth and efficient manner; facilitate the task of the Secretary-General in the conduct of his relations with Member States on disarmament matters; contribute to an integrated approach to issues relating to the maintenance of peace and security; and facilitate the exchange of ideas between governmental and non-governmental sectors with a view to promoting a better understanding of United Nations endeavours in the field of disarmament.

Paragraph 1.19

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (v) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, with the following modification:

After in accordance with the insert relevant

Paragraph 1.21

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (v) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Paragraph 1.30

Replace the text of the paragraph with the following, as a new subprogramme:

The objectives of the subprogramme are:

(a) To promote the decolonization process in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly for the seventeen remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories;

(b) To strengthen the dissemination of information on decolonization in order to mobilize world opinion and to ensure the provision by the specialized agencies and institutions associated with the United Nations of assistance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples will continue to examine the application of the Declaration and to seek suitable means for its immediate and full implementation in all Territories that have not yet exercised their rights in accordance with the Charter and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. It will formulate specific proposals to this effect, examine the full compliance with the Declaration and other resolutions, formulate specific proposals for the elimination of the remaining manifestations of colonialism and report thereon to the General Assembly and enlist worldwide support for decolonization. The Special Committee will continue to dispatch visiting missions periodically to colonial Territories, in consultation with the administering Powers, so as to enable the Special Committee to obtain first-hand information on conditions in those Territories; examine the views, expressed orally or in writing by peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, and also the views of the representatives of non-governmental organizations and individuals with a knowledge of conditions in those Territories; and assist the General Assembly in making arrangements, in cooperation with the administering Powers, to secure a United Nations presence in the Non-Self-Governing Territories to observe or supervise the final stages of the process of decolonization.

The Department of Political Affairs will continue to assist the Special Committee in the implementation of its mandate, as well as the General Assembly, in connection with issues under this subprogramme, as appropriate. To that end, the Department will:

(a) Provide substantive servicing to the Special Committee and its visiting and other missions, as well as to the General Assembly when they review issues relating to decolonization;

(b) Undertake research, analytical studies and reports on conditions in the Territories;

(c) Provide assistance to the Special Committee in the preparation of its reports to the General Assembly;

(d) Collect, review and disseminate basic material, studies and articles relating to decolonization;

(e) Promote, in cooperation with the Department of Public Information, a publicity campaign on decolonization. Subject to the relevant decisions by the Special Committee, this will entail organizing panel discussions and seminars, producing and disseminating publications, organizing exhibits and coordinating international activities aimed at the elimination of colonialism, including liaison with international organizations and individuals concerned with the problems of decolonization;

(f) Promote flows of assistance from specialized agencies and institutions associated with the United Nations to the people in the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Paragraph 1.31

Replace the paragraph with the following:

The General Assembly Affairs Division will provide the required substantive services and prepare reports of the Trusteeship Council if it should meet, in accordance with its rules of procedure.

Paragraph 1.33

In the last line, after their insert inalienable

Paragraph 1.34

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (z) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Replace the second sentence with the following:

The Division for Palestinian Rights, which works in consultation with and under the guidance of the Committee, is responsible for providing secretariat services in support of this subprogramme.

Paragraph 1.35

The General Assembly approves the proposal contained in paragraph 46 (aa) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Replace the second sentence with the following:

The Middle East peace process gave rise to renewed hopes for final settlement and opened new possibilities for supportive action by the United Nations.

Paragraph 1.36

Replace the paragraph with the following:

A third objective will be to heighten awareness of all aspects of the question of Palestine by providing forums to facilitate consideration of relevant issues and promote dialogue among parties concerned, Governments, United Nations bodies, non-governmental organizations and prominent personalities.

Paragraph 1.37

Replace the paragraph with the following:

A fourth objective will be to continue to provide information on the question of Palestine and continue the development of the United Nations computer-based information system on the question of Palestine (UNISPAL), in cooperation with relevant departments of the United Nations Secretariat, including the Department of Public Information, and United Nations organs, organizations, bodies and specialized agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations.

Programme 3. Outer space affairs

Modify the title of the programme to read:

Peaceful uses of outer space

Programme 4. Legal affairs

Paragraph 4.9

At the end of the paragraph, add:

The negotiation, where required, of status-of-forces agreements between the United Nations and the host Governments in connection with the activities of United Nations peacekeeping operations will also form an important objective of this subprogramme. In this regard, due consideration should be given to the obligation of United Nations officials in the conduct of their duties to observe fully both the laws and regulations of Member States and their duties and responsibilities to the Organization.

Programme 6. Africa: New Agenda for Development

Paragraph 6.2

In the tenth line, for is to be read was

Paragraph 6.6

In subparagraph (a), after New Agenda insert in accordance with General Assembly resolution 51/32

Paragraph 6.8

In subparagraph (b), after New Agenda, insert including those agreed upon at its mid-term review;

Paragraph 6.10

In subparagraph (b), after New Agenda and insert the complementary role of

Add a new subparagraph (d) reading:

(d) To promote and strengthen subregional and regional cooperation and integration through appropriate programmes, especially those identified in the mid-term review of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

Programme 7. Economic and social information and policy analysis

Paragraph 7.5

At the end of the paragraph, insert:

and provide for improved coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and other relevant statistics-producing intergovernmental organizations

Programme 8. Development support and management services

Paragraph 8.1

Replace the paragraph with the following:

The general purpose of the programme, for which the Department for Development Support and Management Services has responsibility, is to support the efforts of the developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, to create and support a favourable climate for sustainable development. Thus, it should support, by means of technical cooperation, the activities of Member States aimed at strengthening their administrative and financial systems for development, consolidating institutional capabilities and infrastructures and implementing economic and social policies, according to their national development priorities, so as to contribute to sustainable development. To this end, the programme makes available to the developing countries and those with economies in transition, technical know-how and personnel specialized in the fields of public administration and finance, economic and social policy and planning, as well as the planning and management of natural and energy resources.

Subprogramme 8.1

Modify the title of the subprogramme to read:

Public administration, finance and development

Programme 9. Trade and development

Paragraph 9.3

Replace the first sentence with the following:

At the ninth session of UNCTAD, Governments recognized that development had evolved from a narrow focus on economic growth and capital accumulation to a multidimensional process, with the ultimate goal of bettering the human condition.

In the second sentence, after confront insert growing

Paragraph 9.5

Replace the paragraph with the following:

At its ninth session, UNCTAD, as part of the United Nations system and a contributor to its revitalization, has adopted far-reaching reforms, as embodied in the Midrand Declaration and "A Partnership for Growth and Development", adopted by consensus at that session of the Conference, which encompass its programme of work, its intergovernmental machinery and the reform of its secretariat, including its complementarity with the World Trade Organization, inter alia, by making its analysis of trade and development available to the World Trade Organization, and its cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and relevant organizations. In consequence, UNCTAD is adapting itself to new economic and institutional modalities created by the process of globalization, the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations and agreements, and the creation of the World Trade Organization.

Add a new paragraph 9.5 (bis) reading:

UNCTAD will continue its role as the focal point within the United Nations for the integrated treatment of development and interrelated issues in the areas of trade, finance, technology, investment and sustainable development.

Add a new paragraph 9.5 (ter) reading:

UNCTAD will deal with the problems of the least developed countries, sustainable development, poverty alleviation, the empowerment of women and economic cooperation among developing countries in a cross-cutting manner. While concentrating on its main activities and objectives, UNCTAD will pay due attention to the outcome of global conferences.

Paragraph 9.11

Add a new subparagraph (g) reading:

(g) To continue the work of UNCTAD, in accordance with its mandate, in assisting the Palestinian people to develop capacities for effective policy-making and management pertaining to international trade, investment and related services. In this regard, UNCTAD should take into account the work done by other international organizations in order to enhance synergies, avoid duplication and coordinate related activities.

Paragraph 9.17

In the fourth line, after developing countries insert , such as landlocked and small island developing States,

Paragraph 9.21

In the second line, for Least Developed Countries, read Least Developed, Landlocked and Island Developing Countries

Paragraph 9.22

Add a new subparagraph (c) reading:

(c) To ensure the effective implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, particularly as it relates to the specific role assigned to UNCTAD in the areas of trade research and analysis.

Paragraph 9.23

Delete the paragraph.

Paragraph 9.24

The last sentence should read:

In accordance with the outcome of the ninth session of the Conference, in particular paragraphs 106 and 113 of "A Partnership for Growth and Development", least developed countries will constitute a cross-cutting issue in the work of UNCTAD and the sectoral issues will be dealt with by the divisions of UNCTAD within their respective mandates.

Programme 11. Human settlements

Modify the title of subprogramme 4 to read:

Assessment, monitoring and information

Programme 13. International drug control

Paragraph 13.1

In the first sentence, delete , both of which have proliferated in the wake of the globalization of trade, travel and communications

Programme 15. Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific

Paragraph 15.4

At the end of the paragraph, add:

It will emphasize South-South cooperation, including the triangular modality of collaboration, to guide specific activities in achieving the objectives of the various subprogrammes.

Paragraph 15.6

In the second sentence, for with support read with appropriate support

In the same sentence, after developed countries insert as well as from United Nations agencies, funds and programmes

In the same sentence, delete , that is, tripartite cooperation

Paragraph 15.11

Replace the second sentence with the following:

The goal is to strengthen national capacities in achieving environmentally sound and sustainable development, focusing on the regional strategies and action programmes that have emerged from recent global conferences such as the World Summit for Social Development, held at Copenhagen in March 1995, and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held at Istanbul in June 1996.

Add a new subparagraph (c) (bis) reading:

To work with Governments and regional and international associations of local authorities, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academic institutions and other regional or subregional groupings to develop regional human settlement plans of action, addressing priority issues specific to the Asia and Pacific region.

Add a new subparagraph (f) (bis) reading:

To promote opportunities that will enable developing countries to acquire environmentally friendly or sound technology to contribute to the strengthening of national capacities in achieving sustainable development.

Programme 19. Human rights

Paragraph 19.1

Replace the last sentence with the following:

The programme is based on the principles and recommendations of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

Paragraph 19.2

The beginning of the paragraph should read:

The programme is under the responsibility of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, who performs his functions under the direction and authority of the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution 48/141, and its objectives are to provide the leading role on human rights issues...

In the eighth line, delete potential

Paragraph 19.3

The General Assembly approves the proposals contained in paragraphs 199 (e) and (f) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Replace subparagraph (h) with the following:

(h) The adoption of more efficient methods within the United Nations to promote and protect human rights, including by preventing human rights violations throughout the world and removing obstacles to the full realization of human rights;

Delete subparagraph (i).

In subparagraph (m), for participation read contribution

At the end of subparagraph (m), insert according to the legislative mandates in effect regarding these issues

Paragraph 19.4

Delete the paragraph.

Paragraph 19.5

The beginning of the paragraph should read:

The primary objectives of this subprogramme will include promotion and protection of the right to development. In this regard, the objectives will be...

The General Assembly approves the proposals contained in paragraph 199 (h) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, with the following amendments:

In the fourth line, after Right to Development insert and subsequent mandates

In the seventh line, after right to development insert as an integral part of fundamental human rights

Paragraph 19.7

Delete the first sentence.

Paragraph 19.8

Delete the first sentence.

Programme 23. Public information

Add a new paragraph 23.6 (bis) reading:

Some long-standing world problems persist and an informed understanding among the peoples of the world is still needed and remains one of the objectives of the Department. This is especially true in the areas of peace, security and disarmament; the question of Palestine; self-determination and decolonization; human rights, including racial discrimination; and development.

Paragraph 23.7

For major read first

Programme 24. Administrative services

Paragraph 24.12 (a)

At the end of paragraph 231 (h) of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, insert under relevant regulations established by the General Assembly